

MEETING SUMMARY
PANTEX PLANT CITIZENS' ADVISORY BOARD

NINTH MEETING

Tuesday, January 24, 1995
1:30 - 6:30 p.m.
West Texas A&M University
Canyon, Texas

INTRODUCTION

The ninth meeting of the Pantex Plant Citizens' Advisory Board (PPCAB) was held on Tuesday, January 24, 1995 at West Texas A&M University, Canyon, Texas. Members conveyed appreciation to Dr. Russell Long, Acting President, for hosting the meeting and providing refreshments. The meeting began at 1:30 a.m. and adjourned at 6:35 p.m.. The agenda included the following:

- o selection of members to attend a site-specific advisory board (SSAB) meeting February 14-15 in Washington DC
- o discussion of appointees to National Center for Plutonium Studies Advisory Committee
- o updates from the Department of Energy (DOE), including an occurrence report and other items; from Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) regarding contamination of the aquifer; from the Office of Attorney General regarding environmental impact studies; and several other items
- o a roundtable discussion on monitoring with Dr. Stephen Galson, DOE; Dr. Randy Charbeneau, UT-Austin; Dr. Howard Liljestrang, UT-Austin; and Don Hancock, Southwest Research Institute
- o discussion on the location of a new environmental air monitor and relocation of a current monitor
- o reports from each of the four subcommittees
- o plans for next meetings and selection of fourth Thursdays from 1:30 - 5:30 p.m. for meetings for March through June, 1995

The meeting was preceded by a news conference at which the co-chairs presented the PPCAB's goals and noted the transition from organizational to substantive work. Members drew straws to decide who was eligible for more than one term of office.

PPCAB Members in Attendance: Pamela Allison, Sam Arkaifie, Mavis Belisle, Willie Beverly*, John Blakley, Lowell Cranfill*, Louise Daniel, Beverly Gattis, Hermilo Martinez*, Coco Medina*, Trish Neusch, Denise Price, William Seewald, Doris Smith*, Jere White, and C. E. Williams. (* = not present for full meeting)

PPCAB Members Not in Attendance: Tonya Kleuskens, Patrick Padilla, Guyon Saunders



Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: Boyd Deaver and Joe Panketh, Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission; Gerald Johnson and Tom Williams, Department of Energy; Roger Mulder, Office of the Governor; Joe Martillotti, Texas Department of Health Bureau of Radiation Control; Sam Goodhope, Office of the Attorney General; Gary Baumgarten, Environmental Protection Agency

Ex-Officio Members Not in Attendance: none

Resource People in Attendance: Bruce Campbell, Mason and Hanger; Thomas Edwards, Office of the Attorney General; Bill Weinrich, Mason and Hanger

Meeting Facilitator: Diane Sheridan, The Keystone Center.

Observers: Dwin Barnett, Pantex; Paula Breeding; Jay DeLoach, DFNSB; Gordon Darrow; Rusty Donelson; Bob Gray, Pantex; Dave Heim; Jerry Stein, Dean Trieble, Pantex; Marilyn Van Petten

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments distributed to board members and guests during the meeting are not included here. Copies will be sent to board members who were absent. Others may obtain attachments by contacting Bruce Campbell, Mason and Hanger, at 806/477-3114 or visiting a DOE Reading Room.

REPORT FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

The co-chairs had no report other than to see that the following two items were considered.

Advisory Committee to National Resource Center for Plutonium Studies

Members discussed the appointment of two PPCAB members to an advisory committee to the National Resource Center for Plutonium Studies. The reason for appointing members now is that the consortium has a general scope of work but has not yet developed detailed plans. Community input into those plans is sought and is expected to influence the work the universities will perform.

Questions were asked about who governs the center, how they were chosen, and why the group is not more balanced. The center will be governed by the chancellors of the three universities and Wales Madden, Junior, of Panhandle 2000. Members also asked what the duties and powers of the advisory committee would be, how often it would meet, who was selecting its members, how many members it would have, and what balance and diversity is being sought.

Early in the meeting the group agreed to appoint two members with the understanding that, if they felt they were of only token importance, they could resign. Mavis Belisle did not support this decision because she was concerned that the community input would be only token in nature; however, she chose not to prevent the PPCAB from moving ahead. When the two PPCAB members were to be selected later in the meeting, a quorum was no longer present. The following members expressed interest in serving: Sam Arkaifie, Lowell Cranfill, Beverly Gattis, and William Seewald. Those absent at that point in the meeting should notify Sheridan if they also wish to be considered

At the February meeting, Williams will provide answers to the questions listed above. If they remain comfortable doing so, the PPCAB will then select two members to serve. Until that time, those who have expressed interest may attend any meetings of the advisory committee as observers from the PPCAB.

SSAB Meeting

PPCAB will be represented at a February 14-15 meeting in Washington for site specific advisory boards (SSABs) by Louise Daniel and Hermilo Martinez, co-chairs; and Sam Arkaifie, John Blakley, and Coco Medina. Participants will report back at the February 22 PPCAB meeting.

UPDATES

Department of Energy

Gerry Johnson, Area Manager, DOE Amarillo Area Office, summarized the occurrence report sent to members before the meeting. He said that having only two procedural violations was a good sign. Improper labeling of a high explosives container showed it was empty when it was not; this discovery has led to increased emphasis on controls over those containers. In another incident, while cleaning up a spill of diesel fuel, workers found soft asphalt. Their investigation revealed the spill was also under the pad. The search for a root cause resulted in the discovery that those pumping diesel were putting the pump on automatic and walking away, leading to occasional overflows. The area now has an attendant as well as non-locking pump handles. Johnson said the spill was reported to TNRCC; Deaver said it has already been cleaned up. Asked whether and how DOE tracks items such as a blast door interlock described in the report, Johnson said the reports are reviewed for trends or common problems. When something occurs several times, there is an effort to find the root cause since one root cause may lead to multiple incidents.

Johnson responded to interest in whether the shutdown of the Y-12 plant in Oak Ridge was affecting handling of highly enriched uranium at Pantex. He said that tight scheduling is needed so that Y-12 can take the material. If Y-12 does not start up again, dismantling will have to be slowed down or weapons will have to be more selectively chosen for dismantling. Pantex has some surplus capacity and is not currently experiencing a buildup of storage of HEU awaiting shipment to Oak Ridge.

Heat buildup in igloos was described in the Plutonium Vulnerability Assessment. To avoid heat buildup during the hottest part of the year, components that generate the most heat are separated from each other. Some rearranging of pits is also underway. Workers are monitored for exposure to radiation since such work increases their potential for exposure. Johnson was asked to bring more information about the susceptibility of pits to changing temperatures. A member recalled the vulnerability assessment referring to daily changes in heating and cooling being a concern. Joe Martillotti of the Bureau of Radiation Control recalled the reference as seasonal rather than daily changes. A process of thermal shocking is thought to have caused the cracking of a pit a few years ago.

Johnson reported that six magazines have been completed in the Stage Right project, with work proceeding at the rate of one a month. Approximately 400 pits are in each igloo. High member interest in the Stage Right conversion and the heating and cooling issue led members to ask Johnson to provide routine updates about storage of pits.

Other Updates

- o Thomas Edwards of the Office of Attorney General provided a handout (*Attachment A*) showing schedules of Environmental Impact Studies (EIS) underway at DOE sites. While EISs are published in the *Federal Register*, other environmental studies or assessments are not. Thus it is hard for the state or anyone else to keep track of them. He also pointed out that an EIS or study at another DOE site might have impacts on Pantex and, thus, should also be followed. Edwards said the Attorney General's office will follow the *Federal Register* notices. Tom Williams and Dean Trieble of Pantex will find out how best to keep the group informed about such items by contacting the Pantex staff member responsible for compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Roger Mulder said that the Agreement in Principle could add as a task the disseminating of information about schedules of EISs and other studies that affect Pantex. This could be done at the quarterly AIP meetings.
- o Dean Trieble of Pantex offered members copies of several environmental assessments and passed around a sign up sheet. Absentees who wish more information should contact Bruce Campbell for details.
- o Boyd Deaver said that Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission (TNRCC) has confirmed the presence of nitrates in groundwater. They will meet January 31 with nearby landowners. Dr. Bennett of the Bureau of Economic Geology reports that his identification of high explosives in the groundwater was erroneous.
- o (b) (6) informed members that she regrets she must miss the February and March PPCAB meetings while her husband receives special cancer treatments.
- o Beverly Gattis asked about the Pantex Site Development Plan recently mailed to members, with a short time frame for comments. Johnson said he would like the PPCAB, perhaps via a task force, to provide input on the 1995 version of the plan. The 1994 version, which the PPCAB received, provides background.
- o Tom Williams said that Assistant Secretary Tara O'Toole has asked to meet with the PPCAB on March 1 while she is in Amarillo. Charles Curtis will accompany her. Members asked Williams to provide details to them. This will be a special meeting of the PPCAB with attendance encouraged but not subject to the attendance policy.
- o In response to members' occasional questions about how to learn more about consensus, Sheridan will attach to the meeting notes suggestions of several books about consensus and negotiation (*Attachment B*).

MONITORING ROUNDTABLE

PPCAB members heard from four experts invited to provide an outside perspective on monitoring. Each was offered the opportunity to make some opening remarks about the goals of a monitoring program and what the PPCAB could be doing. Following that, PPCAB members and ex-officio members engaged in dialogue with them, and they with each other.

Dr. Stephen Galson is the Chief Medical Officer at DOE headquarters. As an occupational medicine specialist, his interest is worker health and safety. He provides policy advice to Tara O'Toole, Assistant Secretary. His office conducts epidemiological research on current and former workers, DOE communities, and international sites. They also provide oversight and technical assistance on worker health and safety and environmental protection. Galson believes the PPCAB should consider worker health and safety issues and would be

pleased to be a resource to the group. He feels that the risk assessment movement in Congress and the regulatory agencies will have an impact, particularly a bill that would revamp how the government does risk assessments. Risk assessment proposals usually call for resources to be directed to sites or activities that pose the greatest risk.

Don Hancock has spent 20 years with the Southwest Research Institute, working on nuclear issues. He explained that monitoring has many aspects, and should be thought of not just as instruments and sampling but rather as a whole system. A monitoring system should document what comes in, what happens to in the plant, and what leaves the plant so that anything that escapes even inadvertently can be found. He emphasized that waste minimization and water conservation were the most cost effective and environmentally sound ways to handle materials.

Hancock noted that air and water monitoring at Pantex are of recent origin, and that major improvements have been made in monitoring. He believes attention should be given to levels of chromium and trichloroethane that are found in some wells at elevated levels. He emphasized that monitoring is not just knowing what happens but also investigating why it happens.

Hancock suggested that monitoring programs should achieve four goals, as described in *Attachment C*. Asked what the PPCAB should be working on, he suggested the following:

- o Ask for waste minimization goals, with worker involvement because workers usually offer the best suggestions for reducing waste.
- o Support water conservation and time frames to achieve goals.
- o Be sure occurrence reports are shared in a timely fashion with the public.
- o Read the annual and quarterly environmental reports and urge that they be published in a timely fashion. They provide information to help the PPCAB track waste minimization efforts, for example.
- o Be sure results of monitoring programs are made available quickly.
- o Urge that goals be set for monitoring, alternate ways of achieving them considered, and pros and cons of those options explained to the public.

Acknowledging the cost of a major monitoring program, Hancock suggested that all 109 emission points identified by the Radian Corporation be monitored but that analysis be performed on fewer points unless a specific need to do so is identified.

Dr. Randy Charbeneau has been with the Center for Research and Water Resources at the University of Texas at Austin for 16 years. He is part of the consortium of universities that has formed the National Resource Center for Plutonium Studies. His interest is groundwater monitoring, particularly subsurface fate and transport of hazardous materials. The consortium has compared the Pantex monitoring programs to those for nuclear power plants. He reminded the group that there are two kinds of monitoring taking place at Pantex: compliance monitoring and characterization monitoring.

Dr. Howard Liljestrand is the Civil Engineering Graduate Advisor in the Civil Engineering Department at the University of Texas at Austin. Liljestrand's students do research on the air, water, and soil. Dry deposition of gases onto plants as well as wet deposition, such as acid rain, are among the topics they study. His students are currently working on evaluation of

the mathematical models that estimate fugitive emissions, trying to determine which variables control the output of the model. Because it is too expensive to monitor for everything, models are used to estimate releases.

During the discussion that followed, concerns were expressed about the impacts of federal budget cuts on activities at Pantex. Deaver said that while DOE wants to meet health, safety, and environmental goals, budget cuts could lead to compliance issues if cuts are deep. Some emphasized that it is better to spend money on compliance than on fines. Several people spoke to the fact that Pantex is not one of the major environmental cleanup sites and thus may have to fight for funds to complete its cleanup.

With funds, Johnson feels cleanup can occur in a reasonable time frame. He informed the group that Pantex saw a 50% cut in their environmental restoration funds already last year and can expect more cuts. He emphasized that it would be more effective to fund cleanup activities than to continue to characterize the site for many more years. Members noted that more characterization is needed to understand the perched layers.

There is a fear that the worst facilities will get most of the money, which is like rewarding poor management. Galson said that headquarters personnel are well aware of the need to meet compliance agreements because they incur criminal penalties if they do not. PPCAB members will take these concerns to the February 14 workshop.

Asked where to focus if there are limited resources to spend on monitoring, Liljestrand suggested focusing on workers and at the source, then using dispersion modeling for off-site estimates with enough monitoring stations off-site to ensure neighbors that representative information is being obtained. Charbeneau suggested doing compliance monitoring at the source of emissions. He finds that more money is presently being spent on characterization monitoring, though it is of limited duration. Modeling cannot be used to characterize what contamination there is at a site. The Argonne site characterization program is placing monitoring wells wisely to conserve resources. While it would be better to spend more on compliance than on characterization monitoring, it may not be possible at this time. Hancock said that more characterization of what is being emitted is needed as well as characterization for Superfund purposes.

Charbeneau said that the Bureau of Economic Geology, Corps of Engineers, and Argonne Labs are all drilling to characterize the site and are meeting jointly. As a consortium representative, he attends their meetings because one of the consortium's tasks is to look at alternatives for remediation. Members would like the consortium to provide them insights into the process.

Concern was expressed about using risk assessment as the only basis for setting priorities. It will be hard to take preventive measures into consideration if risk assessment is overemphasized. Local economic and political factors should also be considered.

Waste minimization was cited as an area that needs emphasis. Asked how citizens can appraise Pantex's efforts, a speaker suggested asking Pantex what are the most important sources of air and water contamination and what they are doing about them. Waste volumes are listed in the annual environmental report, and can be tracked from year to year. Hancock suggested that Pantex set numerical goals with the understanding that they can be revised after evaluation. Speakers also said that the PPCAB can tell Pantex that waste reduction is important to the public and schedule updates. If the PPCAB works with the state agencies, they could use the Agreement in Principle as a place to encourage waste minimization.

Gerry Johnson suggested the PPCAB work plan include a presentation from Mason and Hanger on waste minimization. He cautioned the group that it is easier to reduce waste from a manufacturing facility than it is from a disassembly facility. The increase in volumes seen in the annual environmental report is due to dismantlement.

Cleanup of groundwater contamination was considered with members asking how that can be done with a variety of contaminants. The pump and treat method is not as effective as many would like. Deaver felt the source must be controlled, bioremediation used where possible, and something done to deal with chromium. The chromium seems to have come from a cooling tower found in photos from the 1960's. There does not seem to be a current source of chromium. Charbeneau emphasized that bugs won't eat chromium and that it probably requires pumping, treatment at the surface, and reinjection. He also noted that treating solvents at the same time as high explosives presents a challenge since one requires aerobic conditions and the other anaerobic conditions. One speaker said that pump and treat has a bad name due to solvents but is the only method that may work in certain cases. All speakers felt that bioremediation held promise for some of the contaminants.

Asked whether the Department of Energy would be dissolved as some Members of Congress have proposed, speakers said that the president wants DOE to remain its own agency but Congress seems less sure. Due to dismantlement activities, they felt there would be a Pantex whether or not there is a DOE. Johnson reviewed the various predecessor agencies for which he worked in his years in the weapons complex.

A member stated that fenceline air monitoring had been increased without much consultation and wants to be assured the monitoring is effective, with sites also selected with worker input. Liljestrand said the map shows a classic design but with a lot of monitors. He suggested spot sampling as a way to improve operations, rather than scheduled sampling every sixth day. Since an accident is what might concern neighbors most, continuous collection of data would be most helpful. Though not always analyzed, the data would be available if an event occurs and then could be analyzed. Joe Panketh said that the five nonradiological monitoring sites were selected after review of the emissions inventory conducted by the Radian Corporation. (The other 34 sites are radiological monitors.) Not many were organic emission points. In addition to the every-sixth-day schedule, TNRCC would like to do some random sampling. In addition, the new continuous infrared monitor will look for volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Hancock pointed out the value of PPCAB review of the annual environmental report. He finds the data sometimes contradictory and accompanied by sweeping statements that seem to oversell what the data say. He urged regular reporting by DOE, with data released the quarter after they are collected. He also felt that upsets could be reported at PPCAB meetings. Rather than waiting for headquarters to approve a report, he asked why the data themselves cannot be released since they are not subject to editing.

PLACEMENT OF AIR MONITORS

Joe Panketh of TNRCC asked members for input on the location of a new continuous air monitor and possible new locations for a current monitor (*Attachment D*). All are to monitor emissions that may reach the community, and they are environmental rather than radiological monitors.

Panketh expects the continuous air monitor to be installed in April or May. It can look for 175 or more VOCs. With the prevailing winds coming from the south/southwest, he proposes putting it north/northeast of the burning grounds. It must be in a secure location with power and phone lines as well as access. It analyses at the site and sends results by modem to

Austin, where TNRCC validates them. The monitor can be moved, though not so easily that it can be called portable.

After looking at city well sites, Panketh tentatively selected the city pump station when he found that it had phone and power lines but the well sites did not. The results of modeling to determine how far a plume might go are not complete.

Members agreed that Panketh should pursue the site he proposes to use for a new infrared monitor that will measure volatile organic compounds. It might be moved in future years. They suggested placing it so it did not pick up dust from the road. Discussion revolved around assuring it picks up emissions from the burning grounds. Some felt it was too close to do so; others felt it might be too far away. Some felt that concerns about particulates from the burning grounds could be addressed if Monitor #5 were operating when weapons were being burned.

Many were frustrated that the choice of location seemed dictated primarily by availability of power and phone lines rather than environmental or health goals. Asked about the ideal location, an ex-officio member said that Jeri Osborne's front yard would be a good place but is not public land. The state may not compensate a private landowner for use of land to house an air monitoring station and there are liability concerns.

In regard to the *current* five monitors, Panketh suggested that Monitor #3 be moved to a site west of Pantex, where there are currently no environmental monitors. It would be co-located with a radiological monitor. In its current location, it picks up dust from a road construction materials storage area and, therefore, does not get good data. Some members felt it should be farther north of proposed western boundary site. Others felt it should be east or southeast of Zone 12, closer to major activity areas. They also asked that the winter wind be considered. Panketh will follow up with Trish Neusch, Denise Price, Pam Allison, and Doris Smith for further input. John Blakley will notify Panketh if workers have suggestions for the site.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Nominations and Membership

Lowell Cranfill will chair the subcommittee. PPCAB members received a handout containing notes from three subcommittee meetings, interview questions, notes from interviews, and applications related to the selection of a replacement for Alisa Sell (*Attachment E*). Seven new applications were received for the position vacated by Alisa Sell. The committee reviewed both new and prior applications. Five applicants were interviewed. The subcommittee forwarded three names to the board for consideration (b) (6), and Jeffery Keith) as well as a recommendation that the board appoint Jeffery Keith to fill the vacancy. Since there was no quorum at this point, the PPCAB could not act. At the February meeting, the board will consider this recommendation, which will need to be considered a second time in March before being finalized if, as expected, there is not full attendance at the February meeting. (The full group must appoint new members; if not all are present, the decision must be deferred to a second meeting.)

Reporting for Cranfill, William Seewald asked that a correction be made to the page entitled "Interview of (b) (6)." In Question 1, Line 3, the first word should be *disparate*, not *desperate*. (Members enjoyed the humor of the transcription error and realize (b) (6) would not have referred to elements of the community as desperate.)

The subcommittee revisited the question of emergency management personnel as ex-officio members and recommended to the PPCAB that no changes in ex-officios be made at this time. The PPCAB accepted the recommendation.

During the news conference, members drew straws in order to set up staggered terms. Those with a short straw may serve one term, those with a medium straw may serve two terms, and those with a full-length straw may serve three terms. The straws were selected separately by the two "sides" so that all of one side could not end up with a short straw. Some PPCAB members are concerned that the random process caused some imbalance in stakeholder categories. At a glance, one member said it appeared that four Carson County members have one-term straws. The subcommittee was asked to analyze the results, identify any problems, and bring the board their recommendations for any actions to be taken. At a minimum, the imbalances must be highlighted so that diversity and parity can be maintained when replacements are made. The subcommittee could also make other recommendations. (The bylaws call for two-year terms, with members eligible to serve no more than three consecutive terms. Members of the first board drew straws to establish a staggered system.)

May serve one consecutive term

Guyon Saunders

William Seewald

--Doris Smith --

Jere White

C. E. Williams

Alisa Sell's replacement

May serve two consecutive terms

Mavis Belisle

Tonya Kleuskens

Hermilo Martinez

Coco Medina

Trish Neusch

Patrick Padilla

Denise Price

May serve three consecutive terms

Sam Arkaifie

Pamela Allison

Willie Beverly

John Blakley

Lowell Cranfill

Louise Daniel

Beverly Gattis

Budget and Finance

The subcommittee has not met but will do so before the next meeting and will name a chair. Their previous plans for an office and equipment for the PPCAB are being carried out at this time.

Community Outreach

Tonya Kleuskens will continue to serve as chair. The subcommittee arranged for the news conference held before today's meeting and provided packets for the media. They will continue to consider community outreach needs.

Policy and Personnel

The subcommittee discussed the status of efforts to hire an office help and a facilitator. They have not yet appointed a chair.

Training and Program Subcommittee

Willie Beverly will continue to chair the committee. The model action plan received from DOE for use by all SSABs will be completed but it does not call for the amount of planning the group prefers to do. The subcommittee will prepare a draft work plan for full group consideration as a major agenda item at the next meeting.

NEXT MEETINGS

The PPCAB will meet on Wednesday, February 22 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the Carson County Square House Museum. The major agenda item will be discussion of a work plan for the next year or so. Lunch will be available for approximately \$5.00.

Members considered several options for meeting dates for the next four months and decided to try a consistent date and evaluate its effectiveness in several months. The PPCAB will meet on fourth Tuesdays from 1:30 - 5:30 p.m. in March, April, May, and June. Ex-officio members from Austin may need to leave early to catch the 6:05 plane.